United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1092
4 March 1992

WRDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Warring parties in Somalia sign agreement on immediate cease-fire in Mogadiscio, ending four months of fighting for control over city.

+ Libya submits its dispute with United States and United Kingdom concerning destruction of Pan Am flight 103 and UTA flight 772 to International Court of Justice.

+ In message on occasion of International Women's Day to be observed on Sunday, 8 March, Secretary-General says advancement of women has slackened; calls for efforts to ensure equality for all.

+ Governor of Rio de Janeiro addresses Preparatory Committee for United Nations Environment and Development Conference to be held in that city in June.

* * *

It was announced last night at Headquarters that the Somali parties had signed an agreement on an immediate cease-fire in Mogadiscio, thus ending four months of fighting for control of the city .

According to a statement by the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy to Somalia, Under-Secretary-General James O.C. Jonah, the agreement was signed yesterday by interim President Ali Mahdi Mohamed and General Mohamed Farah Aideed, following four days of negotiations between a high-level international group and the two factions. The document contains a provision for the arrival of a United Nations technical team in Mogadiscio to conclude agreement on modalities for the monitoring of the cease-fire.

Mr. Jonah reported that over 25,000 civilians have been killed or wounded since the resumption of the civil war in November 1991.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

Officials of the United Nations and of regional organizations -- the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference -- witnessed the signing of the agreement.

* * *

A United Nations spokesman announced today that Libya had decided to submit its dispute with the United States and the United Kingdom concerning the destruction of Pan Am flight 103 and UTA flight 772 to the International Court of Justice. He said the Secretary-General had informed the President of the Security Council of this development. The matter is now in the hands of the Court to decide.

The spokesman said the Registrar of the International Court had faxed a letter to the Secretary-General saying that the Libyan authorities had instituted proceedings against the two countries regarding a dispute on the application or interpretation of the provisions of the Montreal Convention for the suppression of unlawful acts against the safety of civil aviation. The Libyans had also filed for the institution of provisional measures under article 41 that states that the parties shall cease and desist from any action in any other fora while this is pending in the court.

* * *

The pace of progress for the advancement of women has slackened visibly and the gap between equality before the law and equality in practice is growing, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali stated in his message marking International Women's Day, to be observed Sunday, 8 March.

The Day was a timely opportunity to strongly reaffirm the goals of equal rights of men and women, as spelled out in the Charter of the United Nations. The Secretary-General noted that, since its inception, the United Nations had steadfastly worked to eliminate discrimination against women.

Women played a critical role in the development process and must thus be at the centre of efforts to create the necessary awareness and also act as the instrument for initiating actions that would help to sustain life on earth, he went on. The importance of empowering the world's women to achieve the broader objective of development and social progress was widely recognized, but now it must be translated into specific action. He called for the formulation of plans for sustainable development with the full participation of women reflecting their interests, needs and perspectives.

* * *

The Governor of Rio de Janeiro -- the host city for the Earth Summit in June -- told yesterday the Preparatory Committee that no matter how important the documents adopted by the Conference would be, they would mean nothing if the people were not educated to understand them.

(more)

In an address to the Committee, Leonel Brizola said the question of environment was, in fact, the question of development and education. Brazil was a kind of synthesis of most problems affecting the world today and it had to face the results of those problems in the name of progress and development.

Work on the infrastructure for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was taking place now, he said. The State of Rio de Janeiro was aware of its responsibility in hosting the Conference and was doing what it could despite its economic problems.

* *** *